United Nations A/57/426

General Assembly

Distr.: General
25 September 2002

Original: English

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 84 (f)
Macroeconomic policy questions: preparations for the International Ministerial Meeting on Transit Transport Cooperation

Letter dated 23 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the ministerial communiqué adopted at the Third Annual Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries, held on 17 September 2002 in New York (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 84 (f): "Preparation for the International Ministerial Meeting on Transit Transport Cooperation".

(*Signed*) Alounkeo **Kittikhoun**
Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries

02-60532 (E) 270902

Annex to the letter dated 23 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Communiqué of the Third Annual Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries, New York, 17 September 2002

We, the Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries, having met on 17 September 2002 at the sideline of the 57th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the Millennium Declaration, which recognizes the special needs and problems of landlocked developing countries, and urges both bilateral and multilateral donors to increase financial and technical assistance to this group of countries to meet their special development needs and to help them overcome the impediments of geography and by improving their transit transportation system;

Welcoming the decision by the General Assembly contained in its Resolution 56/180 of 24 January 2002, to convene an International Ministerial Meeting of Land-locked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation (IMM) in 2003,

Welcoming also the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development, where the international community agreed on measures for financing the development of developing countries, in particular, to the Landlocked Developing Countries.

Recalling the Ministerial Communiqués adopted at the First and Second Annual Ministerial Meetings of Land-locked Developing Countries on September 18, 2000 and November 14, 2001 respectively in New York,

1. Attach the highest priority to the International Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and Representatives of International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation to be held in 2003, and in this regard welcome the generous offer made by the Government of Kazakhstan to host this Meeting in Almaty, and request the General Assembly to adopt relevant decisions at its 57th session accordingly.

2. Believe strongly that the International Ministerial Meeting should adopt a global programme of action with a view to minimizing constraints caused by the lack of territorial access to the sea, geographical remoteness and isolation from world markets, high economic development cost and by prohibitive transit costs. This should contribute to the speedy attainment by the landlocked developing countries of the United Nations goals and targets on poverty eradication, sustainable development and their effective participation in the world economy.

3. View that, as the first United Nations conference of this kind, the outcome of the IMM would be judged against its success in generating high visibility to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing

countries, building up a global consensus on policies and measures to establish efficient transit systems, and mobilizing strong international support to landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours in achieving the above objectives. The IMM should address the special development needs of the landlocked developing countries in a holistic manner and formulate concrete measures to develop effective transit systems in landlocked and transit developing countries.

4. Believe that the success of the International Ministerial Meeting rests on its effective preparation and full involvement of all stakeholders including governments, international organizations of the UN system as well as regional economic cooperation organizations, and professional bodies, multilateral financial institutions and private sectors in their respective mandates and comparative advantages. The International Ministerial Meeting should be regarded as a UN system-wide undertaking, therefore, the full involvement of these stakeholders will be crucial in the preparatory process as it will enable them to carry out their respective responsibilities for the preparation of and fulfill relevant commitments arising from the International Ministerial Meeting. The Group of Landlocked Developing Countries will actively participate in all stages of its preparatory process.

5. Emphasize that the development of transit systems is a multifaceted complex endeavour. It encompasses political, legal, developmental and financial aspects at bilateral, regional and global levels and involves different stakeholders. Thus, we attach utmost priority to a highly visible, efficient and well-coordinated preparatory process.

6. Believe deeply that the efficient transit systems will only be established through cooperative arrangements at all levels. Therefore, in the preparatory process, appropriate measures to improve transit systems at all levels should be considered. In this context, the regional commissions such the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic Commission for Latin America in close cooperation with the OHRLLS, UNCTAD and the World Bank, have a leading role to play in providing effective preparations, which must be completed by March 2003 to provide sufficient time for the first session of the preparatory committee to be held in June 2003.

7. Welcome the establishment of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and the recent appointment of the High Representative with renewed hope and great satisfaction. The Office of the High Representative should be responsible for providing the overall coordination, advocacy and political support for the preparation and organization of the International Ministerial Meeting in close cooperation with and the full involvement of the UNCTAD secretariat, as appropriate, and in collaboration with other UN system stakeholders including the regional commissions, UNDP and the World Bank, as well as other

relevant international organizations such as World Trade Organization, the World Customs Organization and the regional development banks.

8. Emphasize also the strong and continued support of UNCTAD secretariat, in particular the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Least Developed, Landlocked and Island Developing Countries, in addressing specific problems related to Landlocked Developing Countries. In this context, we underscore the experience and comparative advantage of the UNCTAD secretariat in substantive and technical aspects of transit transport. We call on the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to extend his assistance in providing substantive and technical assistance to the International Ministerial Meeting and its preparatory process, in the areas of its competence including international trade, investment for infrastructure development and trade facilitation.

9. Stress also the importance of mobilizing adequate extra-budgetary resources to support the preparatory activities and facilitate the participation of representatives of landlocked developing countries and their transit partners at the International Ministerial Meeting and its preparatory meetings including those at the sub-regional and regional levels. To this end, we welcome the recent launching by the Secretary-General of the campaign to mobilize extra-budgetary resources.

10. Invite the donor countries and international financial and development institutions to actively participate in and provide financial and technical support to the preparatory process and the International Ministerial Meeting.